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ROSG READOUT

(10)
The March 16 meeting of the ROSG produced agreement that:
1) there is an urgent need to get aid money flowing to Kigali,
and 2) the government must be held accountable for the
worsening human rights situation in Rwanda and consequent
erosion of the chances for reconciliation. The first point is
an old one for the ROSG. The second is a new issue with a
potentially significant impact on all our Rwanda efforts..

Aid Urgency

The ROSG was convoked by the UN to prod the donors to get
up-front money to Kigali. The meeting conveyed a sense of
urgency to all those present -- not only about the aid
situation generally but also about the food pipeline. The need
to get aid moving was tempered, however, by sharp criticism of
the difficulties of working with the Government in Kigali. The
GOR's sensitivities about sovereignty, its insistence on being
in charge when it has only limited competence to do so, its
bureaucratic inertia, its political infighting, and a suspicion
that the some in the GOR want to manipulate aid to support
Tutsi hegemony, were elements of the critique. Aid is not
moving easily or well. While donors often have a natural
tendency to blame the client when this is the case, the
criticism of Kigali in the ROSG was new, and is a sign that
disenchantment with Rwandese authorities is on the rise.

There was no clear signal that the meeting produced any new
aid commitments. On the other hand, the passing of time has
meant that promised aid is getting nearer to disbursement as
the various hurdles are overcome. The need for coordination
among donors also emerged as clearly as ever, along with some
signs of progress in this area, particularly in the
administration of justice, where donor coordination in Kigali
has moved quite far. Hopefully, it will be a model for other
sectors.

A Bad Political Report Card

There was a lot of talk from the donors and UN agencies
about political shortcomings of the GOR. The dyspepsia was not
soothed by the simple explanation offered by the UN: the GOR
is under pressure from Hutu extremists, and the money has not
arrived. Rather the focus remained on the GOR's difficult
attitude towards UNHCR and UNAMIR, the threats and worse to
Hutus who are in country or return, the horrible situation in
the detention camps, and intimidation of Hutu moderates.

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Nobody belled the cat on the question of whether this situation is caused by a government not in control, or whether it reflects a systematic GOR policy. The French probably would endorse the latter view, the OAU the former. The OAU representative portrayed the security threat from cross-border incursions as the fundamental cause and justification of the government's behavior. While nobody denied that the old regime is an increasing problem, no one was willing to let Kigali off the hook on this basis.

Reports that there is now virtually zero repatriation from the Goma camps, a net reflow into the IDP camps, and 600 Tutsis returning each day from Uganda, helped darken the impression of the GOR's intentions. So did the report that the government now wants donors to build permanent prisons instead of temporary detention centers. Some (lesser) signs of good news like the UNICEF report that it is working successfully with the GOR on arrangements to get children out of the camps were drowned in the larger negative assessment of the GOR's performance.

Donors have a stake in defining the problems as caused by anybody but themselves. In some donor countries Rwanda is still a significant issue and governments do not want to be publicly blamed for letting Rwanda deteriorate. But events in Rwanda fuel debate about the GOR's ability/will/intentions on reconciliation.

Keep on Plugging

Nobody is ready to throw in the towel. The need, it was agreed, was to try to get aid on the ground soonest, while at the same time talking realistically and firmly to Kigali about its responsibilities for human rights and returnee security. In an effort to remind people that all was not lost, that a center still exists, the U.S. made a point at the close of the meeting that these actions are the best way the international community can shore up Rwanda's weakening political center, our best and only hope. Thin gruel but our only source of nourishment.

Thickening the Soup

The moderate center in Rwanda, as in Burundi, is strained by pressures from the extremes. Our game is to try to buttress the center and discourage the extremists. The international community's action plans should be constructed along the following lines:

We must get the aid moving. The Rwandan government is broke and money is the only way to start fixing it. Donors need to find ways to disburse more rapidly. The ROSG

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underlined this need. There is not much more we can do with our aid, but your visit is an opportunity to determine if the French and Belgians are acting in this regard and to encourage them further. The ROSG did not produce enough hard information on this point. The World Bank thought that the Rwandans will have done the necessary to get the Emergency Support package going by the end of the month. Limits on absorptive capacity in Rwanda make this money helpful but not a panacea.

We must get Rwandans to understand that they have no blank check. When GOR behavior falls short -- as in the detention camps, as in persecuting Hutus (as opposed to prosecuting the genocidal) -- we must respond quickly and sharply if necessary (as we are doing this week re: the detention centers). The ROSG endorsed this general approach.

We need to maintain the presence of Human Rights Monitors. The 80 to 90 on the ground are reportedly proving effective. The hope is to have 140-50; the GOR wants 300. Yet the fund supporting the monitors is running out. Some countries have been slow to fulfill their pledges. The Belgians said their pledge would be delivered to Geneva next week. You should ask about this in Brussels. I did not get a chance to ask the French if their unfilled pledge had recently materialized or soon would. They need to be asked. New money is needed, too. We and the French also used the ROSG to ask the UN to make the info collected by the monitors available on a timely basis and received what seemed to be a positive reply. We are looking into how we can add to our contribution of \$750,000. Will Brussels and Paris do more outside the EU (whose first monitor arrives this week.)?

The food pipeline to the area must be kept filled. It is threatening to run dry. We have added to our 1995 pledge to WFP and are accelerating deliveries. By early this month we had supplied 85% of all pledges for the region received by WFP. Given the lack of response by others, the shortfall in pledges is some 350,000 tons, much bigger than we alone can handle. Critical shortages loom in the next few months and later. It is essential that London, Brussels, Paris and the EU to step forward. Several donors and Peter Hansen endorsed the use of food to encourage repatriation by putting more in Rwanda than the camps (if the security situation Rwanda justifies such action. It does not today.) They also noted privately that UNHCR is still very much against such an approach. Hansen's view that it is an idea whose time has come seems right on the mark. It is something that we should discuss with Mrs. Ogata, if we can get USG agreement.

We need to encourage reconciliation. The GOR continues to resist efforts to promote a dialogue, even one that starts at a

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very low level and involves only civil society. Yet we must persevere in our contacts with the GOR on this score. The Dutch are still deciding whether they will offer to act as a facilitator. The GON Foreign Minister and Cooperation Minister will reportedly meet to discuss our request on March 30. Unless the French or the Belgians raise the issue, it is best left aside pending the Dutch decision.

We must pursue visible and effective justice for the perpetrators of the genocide. The UNSC has just passed a resolution encouraging governments to detain those against whom credible evidence of genocide exists. We want to encourage the International Tribunal to move quickly and effectively in this area. Support for the Tribunal with judges, prosecutors, or cash, is necessary. Point was made by us at ROSG.

Justice in Rwanda must also be established. We, the French, and the Belgians are particularly active in this field. The French reportedly are about to bring 20-30 francophone magistrates into the country. If we and the other donors can get at least some non-Rwandese judges and prosecutors on the ground in the immediate future it would encourage moderates. The Belgians and the French are very active in this field.

We must do what we can to improve conditions in the detention centers in Rwanda which now hold perhaps 30,000. The UN, the ICRC the GOR and the Belgians are working on this one. Sites for additional camps have been identified. The Belgians have contributed some money; the UNDP is using \$1 million dollars of the trust fund for "prison rehabilitation". In fact, the money would be better spent preparing new centers. We don't know right now how much more space or funds will be needed. The U.S. is not in a position to help financially (among other things we would have to use ESF, and the well is dry).

Security conditions for returning refugees must improve. Mrs. Ogata's Zaire force is apparently doing well, though it is still only a fraction of its planned size. But the GOR needs to take steps to make Rwanda more attractive for refugees, a question of will as well as of means and one that needs to be addressed in contacts with the GOR.

Special Message for the French? The GOR keeps accusing the international community of trying to force it to negotiate with exiled genocidal criminals. We have made our position repeatedly clear to Kigali, and we understand that others are sending the same message. If the GOR's position reflects something other than an effort to deflect any talks, however, then some would suspect the French of saying something different. You should attempt to ascertain what the Quai has been saying to the GOR on the subject of reconciliation.

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Also, Embassy Kigali reports that the city is deluged with rumors that the French are training/equipping the exiled Hutu army. We have no information to support these rumors, however, the story is reportedly widely believed, and is another strain on relations between Rwanda and the international community. You should discuss these rumors with the French and urge them to do what they can to quell such speculation. We can then convey Paris' denial of any complicity in training back to the GOR, adding that we have no information to gainsay this denial. It is hard to imagine even the most ardent of French nationalists supporting the ex-FAR, particularly at election time (but remember the "Rainbow Warrior").

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